ERIC Document Resume | See Instruction Sheet | DATE OF RESUME | DATE RECEIVED

A. PUBLICATION DATA

1. ERIC NUMBER: ED001080
2. ORIGINATOR CONTROL NO(S).: N.A.
3. IDENTIFICATION NO.: N.A.
4. AUTHOR(S): N.A.
5. TITLE OF DOCUMENT ABSTRACTED: Eastern Michigan University's Workshop on the Dropout
6. PUBLICATION TITLE: N.A.
7. EDITOR(S): Greene, Bert I.
8. PLACE OF ORIGIN: ORG. Eastern Michigan University ST. Ypsilanti, Michigan
CITY, STATE
TELE. EXT.
INST/LOC CODE
9. PUBLISHER OR SOURCE: Field Services, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan

10. VOL.	11. PAGES	12. MO./YR.	13. TOTAL PP.
N.A.	N.A.	63	122

DO NOT WRITE IN SPACE BELOW

MICROFILM COPY AVAILABLE YES ☐ NO ☐

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COPYRIGHT RELEASE FILED YES ☐ NO ☐

TYPE OF REPORT
PROPOSAL ☐
IN-PROGRESS ☐
FINAL ☐
FOLLOW-UP ☐

OTHER ERIC REFERENCES:

ERIC SATELLITE CODE

B. INDEXING DATA

14. SUBJECT AREA

15. TYPE OF ENDEAVOR: report

16. INDEXING TERMS (6-12)

		testing programs		
dropouts	guidance	underpriviledged		
curriculum	work experiences	high school students		
dissatisfaction	responsibilities	workshops		

17. ABSTRACT (MAX. 250 WORDS)

A workshop dealing with the high school dropout was held for the purposes of disseminating information and reviewing research in this field. Attempts to provide for the dropout in the high schools are not new, but the basis for implementing a successful program has been found to be teacher acceptance of the student on student terms. All efforts to provide for individual differences help reduce the number of students who leave prior to graduation. The problem should have the combined efforts of school, home, and community.

A significant question to be posed is: How may school attendance be perceived as a desirable and productive experience by the student. Working papers explore such areas as: reading competency as a factor in school dropouts, the role of the elementary school, the impact of guidance on the dropout problem, new programs for dropouts, responsibilities of parents and community, and socio-economic characteristics of dropouts.

Participants were given an opportunity to evaluate the session. Evaluation forms are included in the appendix.

ERIC No.

18. SOURCE OF ABSTRACT

C. FUNDING DATA

19. SUPPORTING ORGANIZATION

20. DIVISION OR DEPT.

21. CONTRACT NO.

PROJECT NO.

22. TOTAL COST OF PROJECT

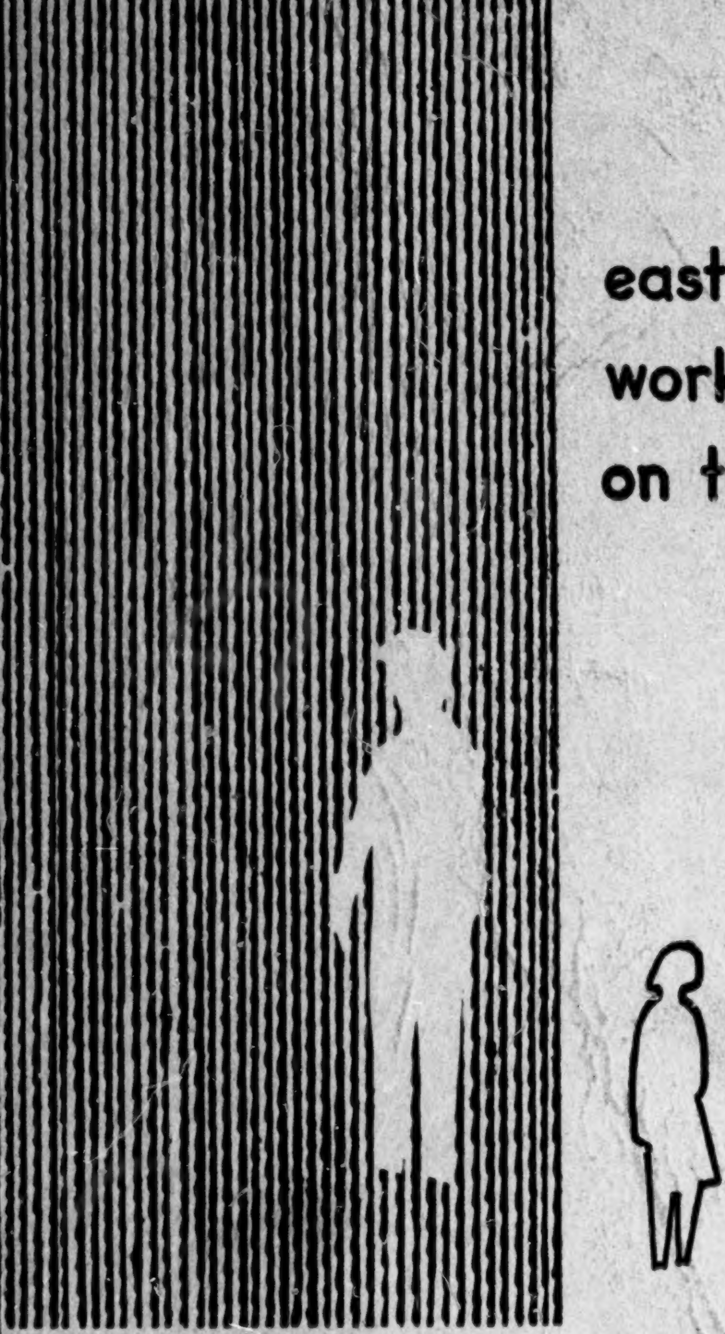
23. DURATION OR PROJECT

U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare
Office of Education

ERIC Form 1

Stalvey

eastern michigan university's
workshop
on the



DROPOUT

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ED001080

EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY'S
Workshop on the
DROPOUT

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Cover design
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Distributed by Field Services, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan
1963

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INTRODUCTION

This report covers the activities of the first workshop dealing with the problem of the high school dropout. This problem is of vital importance to society and has been attracting national as well as local attention. It is a problem that educators have lived with for many years.

This workshop is one of a series of workshops to be presented by Eastern Michigan University. These workshops have a common basis, each will examine in detail a critical issue in education. Of great concern to educators are these critical issues and the need to do something about them. One of the obligations of a university is to be responsive to the needs of educators in the state. The offering of this workshop demonstrates the University's acceptance of this responsibility.

Eastern Michigan University is aware that there is no simple or single answer to the dropout problem. We are aware that the research in this area is somewhat limited and that many suggestions have been proffered in attempts to solve this problem. We also recognize the need to communicate with educational practitioners what is known about the dropout. Therefore, this workshop is an attempt to disseminate information about a vital problem to the classroom teacher and other educators.

The organization and presentation of a workshop is no easy matter. It requires extensive planning, active collaboration and cooperation, and an all out effort on the part of everyone involved in order for it to be successful. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the staff in the Department of Education for having the foresight to conduct this workshop. Their vision in handling this problem and their leadership in conducting this workshop have demonstrated their awareness of the role of the Department of Education.

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MECHANICS OF THE WORKSHOP

by

Bert Greene

The workshop staff met together before the opening session to discuss the format and methods to be used. The staff accepted, in principle, the idea that a rewarding workshop experience is one in which the students are truly active partners, rather than passive listeners. We agreed that one of our major objectives was to establish a climate that would allow the students the opportunity to collaborate with the staff in determining the nature of the workshop.

The brochure describing the workshop stated:

> The 2-week pre-summer session, June 10-21, will have as its purpose the review of research in the area of dropouts. A comprehensive survey of the characteristics of dropouts, reasons for leaving school, and parental attitudes will be explored. There will be opportunities to talk with dropouts and use case studies to get a more complete understanding of the problem. Additional opportunities will be presented to allow for an examination of the impact of dropping out of school on such areas as: employment, job satisfaction, job dissatisfaction, leisure time activities, and continuing education.

This workshop was conceived as a type of setting which would provide educational practitioners with an opportunity to explore in depth some dimensions of the dropout problem. In order to insure a variety of experiences, the staff members were selected because of their diversified backgrounds.

Represented on the staff were: a guidance specialist, a curriculum specialist, a former administrator, a reading specialist, a school-community specialist, and a person who had done research on the dropout problem. It was felt that such a staff, each with a distinct point of view, could demonstrate the integration of theory and practice and the interrelatedness of diverse specialties and the dropout problem.

There were several strengths to the workshop: (a) the staff represented a wide range of educational practices; (b) the students were graduate students, either teachers, administrators, or full-time graduate students; and (c) the workshop was conducted all day long for two weeks. These factors had an impact on the development of the workshop. First, the length of time of the workshop indicated the need for immediate involvement. If anything were to be accomplished during the workshop, the participants should begin working the first day. Secondly, it is not possible for staff members to remain aloof when staff members and students work together six hours a day. The interaction of staff members and students is an important factor in the success of any workshop. Finally, the students were able to approach any staff member for assistance or discussion. The variety of specialties represented by the staff members was a potent element in the workshop.

It is no easy matter to schedule activities for this kind of workshop. The students must be willing to accept responsibility for their learning and help plan their activities.

The major responsibility of the staff is to establish a climate which encourages this kind of activity. Thus, the format for the workshop was dictated by these conditions.

Tables 1 and 2 show the schedule for the workshop. The amount of time devoted to small group discussions could be readily seen to be extensive. These sessions were the heart of the workshop; the crucible in which ideas were hammered out and tested. The theory sessions provided the "grist for the mill." These theory sessions were in effect short lectures given by the staff members, each member presenting a specific point of view or presenting data on the dropout.

We were fortunate enough to secure several young adults who had dropped out of school. These dropouts agreed to be interviewed and willingly answered all questions put to them. For many of the participants, this was one of the high points of the workshop. Here were dropouts who freely discussed, as well as they could remember, the home, school, and community factors which may have caused them to leave school prior to graduation.

Several other resource people were gracious in lending their time and energy to the workshop. These resource people and the films which were used help provide still another point of view.

At the start of the workshop, each participant was asked to complete a short questionnaire (See Appendix A). One of the questions asked the participants to give their reasons for attending this workshop. Table 3 contains this information.

TABLE 1
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Continuing Workshop
Preventing School Drop-Outs

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9 - 11	Opening Session	Small Group Discussion	Small Group Discussion	Small Group Discussion	Small Group Discussion
11 - 12	Theory Session I Structure of the Workshop B. Greene	Theory Session II The Drop-Out as a Person W. Kloosterman	Theory Session III Socio-Economic Factors as Related to the Drop-out G. Brower	Theory Session IV Evaluation Practices as Related to the Drop-out L. Porretta	Theory Session V The Classroom as a Social System G. Fielder
12 - 1	L U N C H	L U N C H	L U N C H	L U N C H	L U N C H
1 - 3	Symposium The Drop-out Problem G. Brower G. Fielder B. Greene W. Kloosterman L. Porretta G. Crampton	Group Discussion	Group Discussion	Activities to be planned by the workshop members	Group Discussion
3 - 4	Independent Study	Independent Study	Independent Study	Independent Study	Independent Study

TABLE 2
EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
Continuing Workshops
Preventing School Drop-Outs

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9 - 11	Group Discussion	Michigan Department of Public Instruction and Dr. Fred Totten-Graduate Division, Community School Program (Flint, Michigan) Dr. John Porter	Interview with Drop-outs	Group Discussion	Group Discussion
11 - 12	Theory Session VI Competency in Reading as it Relates to the Drop-out G. Crampton	Theory Session VII Role of the Elementary School Program B. Greene	Theory Session VIII Impact of Guidance on the Drop-out Program W. Kloosterman	Theory Session IX The Teacher Asks: What Can I Do? G. Fielder L. Porretta	Theory Session X Who Is Responsible? B. Greene G. Brower
12 - 1	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
1 - 1:30	FILM HAVE I TOLD YOU LATELY THAT I LOVE YOU Group Discussion	Group Discussion	Group Discussion	Activities to be planned by workshop members	Group Discussion
3 - 4	Independent Study	Independent Study	Independent Study	Independent Study	Independent Study

Table 3

Reasons for Attending Workshop

Reason	Number	Per cent
To learn about the problem (no reason as to why)	21	47
Help prevent dropouts	10	22
To complete M.A. degree	5	11
Interested in problem (no reason as to why)	2	4
To develop programs for slow learners	2	4
	45	99

It might be noted that almost 50 per cent of the participants came to the workshop simply to learn more about this problem. Only 26 per cent indicated that they had an action program in mind. This does not mean that the other 75 per cent did not plan to do something about the problem. These data merely reveal that only one-fourth of the participants enunciated an action program.

One other question might be worth examination. The participants were asked whether or not they had any expectations for the workshop and if so, what were their expectations. Of the forty-five participants forty-two, or 93 per cent, had any expectations for the workshop. These data are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Participants' Expectations for Workshop

Expectation	Number	Per cent
Information about dropouts	15	36
How to identify potential dropouts	7	17
Programs for potential dropouts	5	12
To learn what I can do	9	21
Role of elementary school	4	10
What is being done	1	2
To develop background	1	2
	42	100

It is difficult to assess the responses to this question. If the respondents were to be divided into two groups, those who expect specific information and those who expect general information, it would be found that 40 per cent expected to gain general information. The point of all of this is to indicate that the participants of this workshop were not so different from their professional counterparts elsewhere. The motivations and expectations of the group were varied. If these questions were asked in a general education course, it would not be suprising to find a similar distribution of responses. It would be fair to say that the participants in this workshop are typical of public school teachers and counselors.

LEARNING IN WORKSHOPS

by

Bert Greene

The purpose of this presentation is to illustrate some of the general learning outcomes implicit in workshop situations, identify some general principles for the learning situation, and to elaborate the rationale of the "the workshop way of learning."

Some illustrative goals. Among the hoped for consequences of our experience together, we may:

1. Find an invitation to free, in some increased degree, an intrinsic personal thrust for learning. One consequence of our workshop experience may be a strengthened awareness that our respective environments, and particularly our human environments, constantly offer us opportunities for learning.
2. Here in our workshop we have an opportunity sharpen and reaffirm some democratic values. For instance, we can examine once again the meaning of rationality with reference to developing a productive group. In this process, we experience again the close dependency between emotionality and rationality. As the welfare of the group depends upon its ability to locate and free intelligence in order to bring it to bear upon

problem solving, so too, does it depend upon its successful coping with the emotional requirements of the individuals and the creation of a climate in which the rational is freed and maximized.

Illustrative of another value is the issue of pluralism and heterogeneity versus monism and restrictive conformity. The richness of the life of a workshop is in some degree related to the group's success in valuing and cherishing differences and establishing norms which encourage a wide expression of differences and contributions.

3. Individuals and groups are in a constant struggle to realize increased validity in their communication. We may very well come to know first hand the difficult problem of listening with accuracy and understanding with empathy. We may discover our own incongruence between what we say and the non-verbal cues which accompany our oral message. We may pick up, at a level deeper than it existed before, the awareness of communication as a "people process" rather than merely as an expression of semantics.
4. Clearly, a major staff aspiration in workshops is to invite learnings which result in the participants' increased behavioral effectiveness. With this goal, we can now examine some of the differences of learning in the classroom and learning in a workshop.

The teaching model. Our orthodox model of education is monastic. In this model, pressures from the outside world are systematically screened from infiltration. In this context, a master, through the use of dialogue, imparts wisdom to his students.

When universities expanded in size, the lecture method was adopted, mainly as an economical factor. University life, insulated from the savage pragmatism of real life, was dedicated to art for art's sake.

A more recent approach to education is vocational training. Here education is synonomous with life and no indivisibilities exist between the boundaries of experience and the hallowed halls of learning. These two models then, both inadequate for a workshop, provide our two traditions to teaching.

It is our contention that ways have to be found to avoid the esoteric insulation from the empirical reality and the dangers of a "cook book" pragmatism.

PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING

The models presented above provide the backdrop for what we consider the essential problem in education - the successful integration between theory and practice, between science and action. It is our main thesis that a more effective use of the classroom can improve this situation. Accordingly, we would like to present a set of postulates with relevance to the classroom which demonstrate our particular biases.

Principle of simulation. The greater the degree to which the learning situation provides a replica for the processes of the real world, the more effective the learning. We should be clear as to what we mean by simulation. We do not mean simply role-playing or observation. What we do mean is that the underlying processes and dynamics must be understood.

Principle of Involvement. The greater the degree to which the student is actively involved and participating in the learning experience, the more effective the learning. This principle is almost a cliche, yet it is worth repeating here. Behind this principle rests the notion that motivation is a great impulse to learning and that motivation is heightened by active, collaborative participation on the part of the student, "I'll learn them" is not only gramatically incorrect, it is a psychological impossibility.

Principle of diagnosis-action. The greater the extent to which the teaching situation contains elements of diagnosis with alternatives to action, the more effective the learning. Typically, in education, diagnosis and action are separated. We sometimes call the action courses "cookbook" and "method" courses; diagnosis or analysis courses are called more abstract, possibly less useful, certainly pure. Lewin once said, "There is nothing as practical as a good theory." Cookbook courses not tied to diagnosis are useless because no one textbook can possibly cover all possible situations. Analytical courses not resulting in action become moot and academic. All courses should tie diagnosis to action.

Principle of variety. The greater the variety of approaches, the more efficient the learning. Effective learning demands the use of all the senses, not only the sense of hearing. As much as possible, the teacher should enlist as much of the whole man in the learning process.

Principle of workshop approach. The greater the degree to which the learning situation capitalizes on experience behavior, the more learning. Essentially, we are saying that behavior occurs and can be evoked by the teacher, and that this experience presents a powerful leverage for the teacher. Obviously, with highly abstract material like advanced mathematics, relevant experience is reduced to zero, but the inventive teacher is constantly on the lookout for classroom behavior, experience behavior which can provide the empirical illumination for a concept or theory. Concepts take on more salient meaning when they pivot on experience.

Although other principles could be stated and discussed, we will now proceed to examine the methods by which education institutions provide for learning.

The lecture. This method has been the most durable, the most disputed, and will undoubtedly be with us the longest. Perhaps no form of classroom teaching can be as scintillating and enjoyable as the lecture. We all remember a professor who dazzled us with his lectures. How much we remember of the lecture is another matter. We can have no doubt that for certain kinds of course contant nothing excels a lecture for presenting a unified body of knowledge in a coherent and economical way.

The failings of the lecture are obvious. Its main weakness centers on the principle of involvement. Although some gifted lecturers can involve students, how much learning is actually internalized is problematical. This method also suffers from lack of relying on the experiences of the students.

Audio-visual. This method is related to the lecture. It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. However, it does not necessarily follow that a thousand pictures are worth a million words. This method suffers most of the difficulties of the lecture method. However, it is more vulnerable in that no personal contact with teacher can be made, there is no opportunity for give and take, and once begun, the film or whatever medium is used, can not be changed to meet unprogrammed classroom behavior.

The case method. There are almost as many variations of the case method as there are users. Although it can be flexible, it is sometimes very rigid and used to force students to respond in a particular direction. The main value of this method is its emphasis on analysis.

Role-playing. This method stresses experience behavior. There is usually active involvement on the part of the students and motivation is high. The major failing of this method is the artificiality of the setting and the fact that to many students, this is a farce.

Discussion seminars. This method is typically involving. However, learning depends on the structure of the course. The major failing is that the individual needs of the students are not always taken into consideration.

Workshop. This approach stresses experience behavior. The class is used as the crucible of learning. There is no known formula that can be plugged in, the class determines the activity and the outcomes. This method provides for all of the principles which have been enumerated. It can be exciting, it can be rewarding, it can be meaningful. The emphasis is on the students accepting the responsibility for their own learning because no one else can determine the suitability of the experience. Thus, for each of us, this experience could and should vary.

To summarize what has been said, the following diagram has been devised. It compares the workshop method with typical classroom methods.

Classroom	Workshop
Teacher tells and demonstrates.	Students and teacher face a problem together.
Students listen, practice, and drill.	Students act to solve by experimenting, discovering and inventing.
Teacher tests students.	Students evaluate own activities and get reaction from others.
Teacher accepts or rejects students on basis of grades.	Students and teacher generalize, theorize, formulate hypotheses, retest, and recycle into the next learning phase.

THE ADOLESCENT WHO IS THE DROPOUT

by

Winton Kloosterman

I have been asked to discuss with you some characteristics of young folks which may be significant in indicating their likely unsuccessful completion of the typical high school program. Certainly this is a critical topic and I shall make an effort to contribute some ideas which may be helpful in our work on this problem.

Before approaching the problem of the high school dropout, it might be well to clarify just what it is we are trying to do in this workshop. We are attempting to examine the dropout problem in a way that will allow us to get to the core of the issue. I, therefore, wish to define the problem in a more provocative way; in a way which can be approached with a degree of logic. It seems to me that the problem with which we are concerned is: How can youth and school people be aided in perceiving school attendance as a productive experience and a worthwhile investment of time and energy and as making pertinent contributions in our democratic society? If we approach the problem this way, it gives us a bit of leverage and a specific job to get done. By viewing the problem this way we are asking people, both students and school people, to organize their thinking and devote their energies to making school attendance a desirable and productive experience. If the school experience is viewed as desirable and rewarding the problem of dropping out will disappear.

As a means of clarifying just who this drop out may be, we ought to take a look at the prevailing characteristics. In this respect it is important to distinguish between several kinds of characteristics. By this I mean that there are characteristics which identify the potential dropout, but the factors which cause him to wish to drop out of school may well be somewhat different. Let me refer at this point to the QUICKIE KIT published by the Michigan Committee on School Holding Power of the Department of Public Instruction.[1] You will note that this booklet has several pages of identifying characterisitics. It is well to look over the characteristics mentioned here. The lists are very good summaries of the available research on what kind of person the dropout is. Characteristics such as continued absences, tardiness, inadequate reading levels, failure to participate in extra-curricular activities and a general lack of enthusiasm for school frequently are symtoms which tell us of eventual school leaving. By being alert to these clues, and by a concerted effort to plan educational experiences which are meaningful to these kinds of youngsters we can make progress toward solving the drop problem. However I would like to point out that these characteristics do not tell us why students behave the way they do. What we need in this kind of a situation is an understanding of the more subtle factors which cause students to drop out of school. In this regard, I think we will approach the problem of school leaving in a much more fundamental and ultimately more valuable way.

---

[1] "Quickie Kit" on School Holding Power, Bulletin # 507 (Lansing, Michigan: The Michigan Department of Public Instruction, 1963).

The people with whom I have worked and who eventually discontinued their school attendance are remarkably similar in their consistent which to escape from what they perceive to be a very unhappy situation. To them, attendance in school borders on incarceration. They see nothing in it other than misery and complete lack of consideration of their personal goals. They talk to me about their goals, which in effect, are nothing but "getting out of here." In most cases, they express little direction to their lives except leaving school. The drive to disassociate themselves from school attendance has become a major goal in itself. These people perceive school as completely unproductive and wish only to be divorced from these miserable experiences.

If we are to work on the prevention of school dropouts, it seems to me that a large concern of ours in this workshop is the improvement of reading levels of teachers. By this I mean reading which converts symbols into significant understanding and comprehension. Let me point out that behavior is frequently a symbol. The question I raise is: How adequate are out teachers in interpreting these symbols? All too frequently we see these symbols in the light of how they affect the organization and instructional program of the school. At the same time, we very seldom interpret its meaning about the kids who are displaying this symbolic behavior. People in schools are oriented toward reading behavior as it affects what they perceive to be their task and seldom do they read it as symptomatic of a personal need or as a flag which directs us into the path leading to its true meaning. I wish to point out that if we are to have a productive experience in this workshop every one of us should leave better able to read the behavior of children in our classroom. By reading behavior we are referring to an insightful and sympathetic approach to those school disruptions which cause us so much concern and frustration. By learning to read this behavior we are increasing the comprehension with which we approach our professional tasks. We are doing more than identifying potential dropouts; we are becoming sensitive to those characteristics of youth which cause them to lose the incentive for staying in school.

Let us talk more about the dropout and his feelings about himself and school. I mentioned earlier that frequently the goals of the dropout are to get out of school and disassociate himself with the unhappiness he has experienced there. Let me point out that this does not mean that the potential dropout wishes to disassociate himself from life. Rather, it is that school life holds no meaning for him. These people wish an association with meaningful experiences; they view the world outside of school as meaningful, the world of school as a meaningless and ego-deflating experience. It is from this kind of a "feeling tone" that the potential dropout develops negative feelings about school. Leaving school has a greater meaning for him than being successful in school. His feelings of self worth become greater as he manifests disdain for school. He frequently finds himself associating with groups which achieve status by failure rather than by achieving success in a socially acceptable affiliation. These young people are soon on the path toward becoming the negative and hostile people who are the floaters from one place to another in the adult world. School has not only failed to reach them, but regreatbly has helped them to feel a greater personal enhancement in their negativism. This is a feeling which may well be part of the personality structure of the person's life. This person is not only a school dropout but is also a resistor to all authority and a likely candidate for programs of social welfare throughout his life.

As we attempt to work on this dropout problem together, it seems to me that we can approach this from either of two angles. First, we can look at the dropout. Who is he? What kinds of things are typical in his make up? How does he react to school? How can the school best live with him? The other alternative is to look at the discontinuance of school attendance as a major problem symptomatic of the failure to make school meaningful to youngsters and a failure of getting youngsters to view school as a valuable and rewarding experience. Either of these approaches is valid for our work here.

It is my hope that some of us will want do more than identify these students who are most apt to drop out of school. If we are to reap maximum returns from our investment in this workshop, I hope we will find ourselves involved in the fundamental problems of making school the rewarding and exciting place it should be. More than this, I hope we will sharpen our perceptions, broaden our view-points, and increase our reading ability so that we, as professional people, will capably convey to youngsters the desire to be successful in their school experiences. If we do this with the vigor and zeal which is rapidly becoming characteristic of our profession, school attendance will not have to be mandatory, it will be desirable and the dropout problem will have been licked.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF DROPOUTS

by

George Brower

I would like to preface my remarks by a comment on the value of research. To me, the difference between utilizing research to solve problems and find answers to questions as opposed to not utilizing it is the difference between utilizing fact and opinion, the difference between a disorganized and a systematic approach. In education, we sometimes react negatively to systematic fact finding. We look at a single thought pattern written down by a student as valid, but if we had the majority of the dropouts of a given school register these same thought patterns, we would call them statistics. I would like to hold out a plea for a thorough search of the literature by this workshop and some take home plans for more research. I believe that many educators have been to easily satisfied with personal opinions for too long and that the time has arrived for a little more systematic approach to problem solving.

The typical teacher and the typical school expect the student to come to school and adjust to the present school situation. They expect him to absorb the subject matter that teachers decide is important. There still is a general lack of concern of what the student's immediate needs are and what students and their parents regard as educationally important.

Work with the dropout requires working with a number of variables at the same time. These include teachers, fellow students, family, neighborhood play group, community, what is taught, how we organize to teach, and many other factors. Because of the many variables it would be highly inaccurate to generalize and highly ineffective to work with one factor at a time. We must learn to approach the dropout problem on several dimensions if we are to have any degree of success.

Two major reasons for dropping out of school are: (1) many youngsters are dissatisfied with school and (2) the inability of students to relate to teachers or visa-versa. These are factors that can be dealt with immediately if educators have the desire and the interest.

Social class is undoubtedly positively correlated with dropping out of school. But once we know this, it is of little value because social class is an extremely broad and nebulous concept that it is almost meaningless. It is made up of 20-30 socio-economic characteristics depending on what scale is used.

Some of the characteristics that make up social class are: length of residence and mobility; sex; occupation; education; income; family background; family structure-complete, broken, or weak; and neighborhood or community. The social participation pattern seems to be most significant in that family pattern and patterns of participation in school activities are related.

Other factors sometimes reported as being significant in studies on the dropout are: religion; position in the family-children between siblings have higher dropout rates; size of the family; age of parents; and race. The racial factor seems to lose significance when other factors are equated.

INDIVIDUAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS.

1. Education.
   a. A finding of a Maryland study-
      1. 78.5% of mothers of dropouts were also dropouts.
      2. 80.3% of fathers of dropouts were also dropouts.
      3. A majority of the parents of dropouts had completed 9 grades of education or less.[1] (Also see Livingston[2] for further information on this topic).
   b. Cohen[3] reports 58% of all dropouts come from homes where all brothers and sisters dropped out of school.
   c. Bowman and Matthews[4] report that only one-eighth of

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[1] Percy V. Williams, "Dropouts," National Education Association Journal (Feb. 1963), 11-12.

[2] A. Hugh Livingston, "High School Graduates and Dropouts-A New Look At a Persistent Problem," The School Review, LXVI (1958), 195-203.

[3] Eli E. Cohen, The Dropout Problem-A Growing Educational Concern Today - National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, April-61.

[4] Paul H. Bowman and Charles V. Matthews, Motivations of Youth for Leaving School, Quincy Youth Development Project (Chicago: University of Chicago, mimeographed, 1960).

the parents of dropouts were strongly opposed to children leaving school as compared to three-fifths of the parents of the control group. It would appear that a sizeable reduction in dropouts could be realized by removing the indifferent attitudes of their parents. A good adult education program might be a short-cut to this task.

2. Social Participation.

    a. Lack of participation in the social and recreational activities of the school by students and in the community by parents is most frequently reported.

    b. Frank Riessman[5] and others, writing on the culturally deprived child point out that many dropouts have difficulty in school because they do not have access to the main stream of culture. It might be added that teachers do not have access to the culture of many dropouts because the necessary information has never been gathered, records have not been adequately kept, or someone has decided the teacher was not competent to use the information and it was withheld.

    c. Livingston[6] reports 85% of the dropouts he studied were rated low in participation in school activities and 60% of the dropouts were isolates when the factor of participation of school activities was examined.

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[5] Frank Reissman, The Culturally Deprived Child (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962).

[6] Livingston, op.cit.

3. Occupation.

   a. Dear[7] notes a high proportion of dropouts among families of laborers when compared to non-laborers.

   b. Counts[8] relates success in secondary education to occupation (type of job).

   c. Bell[9] reports occupation of father as the most potent factor in determining grade attainment or the amount of school a youngster will obtain.

   d. Williams[10] reports that a majority of parents of dropouts were either unskilled laborers or unemployed.

Occupation is the most frequently reported related factor and it is most often linked with education and financial need.

4. Social Adjustment.

   a. This factor is probably responsible for the emphasis on guidance, counseling, and psychological services in our schools. Now all we have to do is to provide them adequately.

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[7] R. Ernest Dear, "Distribution and Persistence According to Paternal Occupations Represented in Secondary Schools in Michigan," Journal of Educational Research, XXVI (1933), 585-92.

[8] George S. Counts, The Selective Character of American Secondary Education, Supplemental Educational Monographs, No. 19 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1922).

[9] Howard M. Bell, Youth Tell Their Story (Washington: American Council on Education, 1938).

[10] Marris Williams, "What Are the Schools Doing About School Leavers?" National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXVII (1953), 54.

b. Liddle[11] reports poor adjustment as a major factor in dropping out of school. Lack of social adjustment is also implied in the social participation data discussed earlier and again in the incidence of broken or weak homes of dropouts reported by other researchers.

5. Income and Financial Need.

a. Low income and financial need are not consistently reported as being factors in dropping out of school. Hand,[12] Young,[13] Brewer,[14] Bell,[15] and Evans[16] report that they are, while McGee[17] and Johnson and Legg[18] report to the contrary. This factor needs more study, especially such aspects as earning money to buy what I want to buy, having an independent source of income, low income as related to poor and crowded housing;

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[11] Gordon P. Liddle, "Psychological Factors Involved In Dropping Out of School" The High School Journal (April 1962).

[12] Harold C. Hand, Principal Findings of the 1947-1948 Basic Studies of the Illinois Secondary School Curriculum Program (Springfield, Ill.: State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1949).

[13] Joe M. Young, "Lost, Strayed, or Stolen," The Clearing House, XXIX (1954), 89-92.

[14] Weldon Brewer, "Why Did They Quit?," Education Digest, XVI (1950), 54-55.

[15] Bell, op.cit.

[16] N. Dean Evans, "How to Conduct A High School Dropout Study," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXVIII (1954), 33-46.

[17] George A. McGee. "We Increased Our Holding Power," National Education Association Journal, XLII (1953) 482.

[18] Elizabeth S. Johnson and Caroline E. Legg, "Why Young People Leave School," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, XXXII (1948), 14-24.

and inability to purchase educational materials in the home, and to travel.

b. Low incomes result in homes of low value which reduce the tax base. This means that there is less money available for the schools. It might be noted that the cheapest program that schools offer is the traditional, classical program. Many educators feel this type of program causes youngsters to drop out of school.

c. Bowman and Matthews[19] report that one significant area is the followup data on dropouts where inability to hold a job and a poor work record is frequently reported. It might be worthwhile to devote some effort toward producing more effective students, more socially responsible individuals, and individuals with good work habits. This might be a fundamental kind of education for the dropout.

6. Mobility and Length of Residence.

a. Dillion[20] found that students move from school and the family moves from community to community. This implies that they never really become a part of any culture. It is possible that the reasons for moving reflect poor social adjustment on the part of the family.

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[19] Bowman and Matthews, op.cit.

[20] Harold J. Dillion, Early School Leavers-A Major Educational Problem, National Child Labor Commit[illegible] Pamphlet No. 40. (New York: Moak Printing Co., 1949).

SUMMARY

This is a long way from exhausting the research in this field, and only a brief mention has been made of the research from related fields. It is granted that relatedness and causal factors are not necessarily synonymous, but it is also evident that research does supply us with clues for action programs in this area if we are seriously interested in them.

A NEW LOOK AT THE DROPOUT PROBLEM

by

Gordon Fielder

Among the resources that should not be overlooked in enriching our perspective regarding the school dropout are the points of view of the various behavioral sciences. In the recent development of my own professional thinking I have come to be influenced more and more by the cultural anthropologist, the field theorist, and that step-child of sociology and psychology, the social psychologist. In their works we can find some fruitful ways of thinking about our main subject--the dropout, and of explaining his behavior. It is the purpose of this theory session to present some of their viewpoints that I have found helpful and significant.

In doing so, we can also, perhaps, discover a broader explanation for some aspects of our own behavior in this workshop. Our discussions in our small groups and in our total group sessions have generally been both free and spontaneous, and indeed, a workshop could not be that without the conditions of freedom and spontaneity. I have been interested, however, in the fact that, as we have come to know each other, there have been frequent and sometimes even sharp dichotomies of points of view. When these have revealed themselves, they have in my judgment been relevant to value-based questions rather than to questions of fact. One illustration of such a dichotomy may be seen in the persistently recurring questions of whether or not the school ought to be concerned with the dropout at all, or if it is, should its task be that of keeping him in school, or of smoothing his path into some other way of life? The concern here is not the existence of the questions, but its persistence, which indicates to me an interesting value separation in our group.

The question that I would like to address this comment to is basically: What happens to individuals who carry one set of values when they meet the carrier of other values? Or more important to us, what happens when individuals living in structured relationships find their values are dissonant and in opposition to one another? What happens when a workshopper finds himself in value opposition to another workshopper? And finally, what happens to the school boys and girls who find their values in opposition to the teacher and the adult world that the teacher represents? Some thoughts concerning these questions are the subject matter of this session.

A point of beginning is to recognize that the dropout does not value school the same way that the teacher values school, and that some teachers do not value the dropout in the same way, or at least to the same extent, that other teachers do. This is because our culture itself contains inconsistent statements of what ought to be done about the dropout. Culture, to move ourselves along, may be defined as that web or fabric of behaviors that not only binds us together, but gives us our collective character--the element of uniqueness. Culture lives in and through the behaviors of individuals, covert as well as overt. It consists of all the ways of thinking and doing, all of the attitudes and value-based postures that enable us not only to relate to ourselves in ways that we commonly understand, but that also enable us to see ourselves in our collective sense, as different from others.

Ralph Linton, in *The Study of Man*[1] provides us with a nomenclature of culture that may be helpful in understanding this. He states that culture may best be understood as universal, specialized and idiosyncratic behaviors. Universal behavior may be defined as those ways of thinking and doing concerning which there is social consensus, or "universal" agreement. This core of cultural content, the normative content of our culture, provides us with the "norms," or criteria, by which we regulate our collective and individual behavior. The core of cultural universals, then, are the well springs of approved behavior and provide us with the validation of judgmatical propositions that have moral dimensions. In addition to this, cultural universals may be seen to be the media of psychological identification, for we identify most easily with other individuals when we feel that we are nearly alike. Universals, then, are a kind of social cement.

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[1] Ralph Linton, *The Study of Man* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1936).

Behavior is also specialized, Linton continues, and sees this as largely vocational in nature. A good example of this might well be that set of "specialized" ways of behaving and thinking that go to make up teaching. Again, consistency of beliefs, attitudes, and values enable teachers to identify one with another and to feel the belongingness that the psychologist sees as so basic to the emotional well-being of the individual.

We might carry this concept of specialization one step further than Linton himself carried it, for it is here that the idea of sub-cultures, or cultural segmentation, can become meaningful. One way or another we all live in one or more sub-cultures. Not only do we, for example, live in a professional sub-culture, but our culture provides us with streams of experiences differentiated by sex and leading to remarkably different life roles. We are also culturally segmented by our capacity to profit from experience (intelligence), by age, by geographical region, and not least importantly from our standpoint, by socio-economic class. The important thing that goes along with specialization is the sociologist's concept of accommodation. This states that although we are different from one another, we are different in ways that we can understand, and that we have acceptance and even esteem for one another. Thus, the teacher values the doctor, and he the teacher of his children. When accommodation breaks down, however, as is so frequently the case with socio-economic differences, we have a problem different in complexion.

We can now see that when we move conceptually from universals to specialized behaviors we have moved from consensus, or complete sharing, to a degree of unsharing, so to speak. This process of unsharing is completed when we come to the idiosyncratic dimension of personal behavior, or that behavior unique to the individual. Here, is the individual in his complete individuality. Here is the well spring of creativity. Here is the world of the private, the genius, the fountainhead of invention, innovation and change.

Frequently, according to Linton, and perhaps always, that which is innovated, invented, or brought into existence by the creativity of the individual comes into conflict with universals or approved specialized behaviors. When this happens we can no longer say that we have a universal, instead, we have according to Linton's nomenclature, a cultural alternative. Alternatives may be thought of as the distracting component of culture. As universality of agreement as to what ought to be provided us with the means of knowing certainty, alternatives provide the media of psychological identification and the feeling tone of belongingness. Commitment to these alternatives builds psychological distance between individuals and group cohesiveness is lost. Alternatives, then, are the conflict content of our culture.

Linton's thesis is that periods of rapid technological change, such as our society is undoubtedly experiencing, create alternatives and diminish universals. Unchecked, a culture can lose cohesiveness to the point of disintegration. At this point he becomes a prophet of doom, and predicts the disintegration of our society.

Right or wrong, he is not alone in his analysis of American culture as being conflict ridden, and that problems derived from this fact have reached crisis proportions. The psychologist knows that the individual who internalizes conflict to the point of abnormalacy (departure from norms) first must experience it. He also says that our culture is producing conflict ridden individuals to the extent that 10 per cent of our population will spend some part of their life institutionalized for being emotionally disturbed. What additional percentage, we may ask, will not be institutionalized, but will be neurotic, maladjusted, unhappy, or just ill-fitted for life's demanding roles? Add to this, divorce statistics, delinquency figures, the statistics on narcotics addiction, alcoholism, illegitimate pregnancies, and other woeful social phenomena and we begin to have an impressive array of evidence that all is not well. As John Childs says in a lengthy and yet succinct statement:

> It (pragmatism) does not believe that our culture can be healthy and stable as long as it remains: authoritarian or intuitive in the sphere of morals and ultimate belief, and experimental in the spheres of research and applied science and the everyday conduct of mundane affairs; pre-evolutionary in its demand for the certain and the immutable, and evolutionary in its recognition of the reality of change and the necessity for continuous adjustment to novel

> developments; prescientific in its view of human nature and behavior, and scientific and prescientific in its view of human nature and behavior, and scientific and naturalistic in its mode of diagnosis and search for causes in the treatment of human disorders; absolute in its doctrine of natural rights, and experimental in its judgments of the functions of public and governmental action; laissez faire in its theory of social welfare, and increasingly for cooperative planning in its daily choices and practices; nationalistic in its theory of absolute sovereignty, and internationalist in its efforst to adjust to an interdependent world; loyal to the abstract principle of equality of opportunity, and discriminatory it is institutionalized practices in social and educational affairs. Although the pragmatists are aware that there is bound to be some lag and tension in any modern society between its ultimate objects of faith and allegiance and its knowledge and its concrete practices, they consider that the present cleavage is too profound and pervasive to be accepted with complacency.[2]

George D. Spindler in his interesting little book, Transmission of American Culture,[3] uses the approach of the cultural anthropologist in delineating significant value dichotomies in yet another way. Analyzing the literature of our profession, he abstracts what he refers to as "Emergent" values. These values held by our literature (itself the cutting edge of developing practice) are a sensitivity to the feeling and needs of others, relativism toward moral norms, a present-time orientation reflecting uncertainty about a future, and that the group as well as the individual is an end.

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[2] John Childs, American Pragmatism and Education (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1956), 361-62.

[3] George D. Spindler, Transmission of American Culture (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959).

Contrasted with these values are those that Spindler delineated through a disciplined study of undergraduate student belief, which he terms "Traditional", and which he states to be a readiness to delay satisfactions to the future, a capacity for self-denial, an orientation to thrift, a strong emphasis on success, a belief in absolute morals, and the elevation of the individual as an end rather than the group. The traditional value system and the emergent system, you will note, are internally consistent systems but are diametrically opposed.

We have been speaking at length about culture, and the way that our culture is inconsistent within itself. Let us introduce one more concept necessary to our contextual backdrop before pointing our comment directly to ourselves and the dropout.

Culture, and the dichotomies it contains, is an abstraction that has no meaning apart from the behavior of individuals since it is a social concept, of individuals-in-relationships. Our culture has no practical meaning to us as workshoppers except as we live in our kind of a relationship. This is to say that culture becomes real as the individual relates himself to others in and through the various structures provided by, and constituting, his society. It is true that a lone individual, apart from others, who is socialized will have predispositions to certain behaviors, but these behaviors will remain innate, or rather potential, until a relationship is entered into. The most meaningful relationship from our standpoint is that provided by the group.

A group is an association of individuals serving purposes that are commonly perceived and valued. I would add, through structured role behaviors. A mere collection of individuals may serve common purposes, but until it provides itself with a structure it has no means of developing self-awareness. This structure comes about through a growth process and arises at a point of time when its members perceive the roles that each plays. This role is self-perception on the part of any one individual. The group exists when he is aware of the roles others play.

The group, then, is a capsule of culture, and the arena of cultural conflict. Whatever reality culture has, is the reality that the collective perceptions of individuals-in-particular-relationships give it. And we should add, as modified by the segment or fragmented cultural environments that provide us with our life space and the delineation of particularized social experience that fills it.

There is accordingly, such a thing as a peer group (made up of the youthful and the immature) and a peer group culture. It lives on the playground, in the hallway, the bus, the cafeteria, the nearby hangout, and elsewhere. There is such a thing as a classroom group and this may be in the sense of the peer group only, or in a special sense of a group that emerges in the service of purposes that are educationally worthy in the perceptions of teacher and student. Or there may be a classroom group that emerges in the service of the worthy purpose (to the group) of getting the teacher's goat!

There is also such a thing as a teacher group, and just as the kids have their little society, so do the teachers. In the same way, it may be this or that, good or bad. And finally, ourselves, here today. We, I feel, have some, but not all, the characteristics of a group. We are fast finding structure and building role perceptions, but the process likely will not complete itself until just about the time our little formal social structure--the workshop--will end. In a very real way, our workshop should begin just when it ends!

Our main thesis can now be stated. It is that an individual can know himself only as he lives through relationships with others; that he knows himself best when living in a group; and that to know himself is to feel himself in some measure, great or small, in conflict with others as to the right way to seek the good life.

The main problem is: What happens when the individual's perceptual field carries incompatible choices? What happens when his culture is alternative ridden, or when his culture is in conflict with that of the adult world, in our case aptly represented by the teacher and his curriculum?

To find one clue to an answer let us return to the research of Spindler[4] who, you will remember, was speaking of the opposition of traditional and emergent values. What happens, he asked, when undergraduate students who are largely carriers of traditional values, encounter in a formal classroom structure an instructor who carries emergent values? One of four reactions, he continues, is likely to occur.

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[4] Ibid.

The first reaction that he identifies is that of the "Reaffirmative Traditionalist." This is the individual who feels threatened by his encounter with an oppositional value. When he understands it, he retreats further into his own value system and structures it ever more rigidly.

The "Compensatory Emergentist" is the second reaction. This individual overly compensates in the direction of the new values. He adopts a jargon and with a lack of critical judgment, the behaviors that are symbolic of the new system.

Spindler identifies the "Vacillator" as the third reaction. This is the individual who superficially internalizes values of both systems rather than developing a coherent synthesis. His behavior is one thing or another at one time or another--behavior in conflict.

The final reaction noted by Spindler is termed by him as "Adjusted." This is the individual who does integrate the new and the old. He is not only capable of change, but he does change through experiencing. He becomes something different through exposure and the difference is a synthesis of values.

I know that you will be glad to learn that Spindler notes that graduate students generally are of the last kind. I wonder, however, if the persistence of the question as to the degree of the school's responsibility for the disenchanted dropout is not best understood as a particular reaction to a value confrontation?

But more importantly, do these points of view aid us in understanding the dropout as a reaction formation? Can he best be understood as a person seeking reality and not finding it in that fragmented cultural environment that we call the school? Is there a contradiction between his values and those of his peers, and/or his teachers? Is he more "realistic" than his fellows and teachers in that he is less concerned with the morality of the school and more accepting of the values of his own environment? Do teachers represent another world, alien in form and content? Does he think in terms of "they" and "theirs" rather than "we" and "ours?"

And would it be proper if I asked the question: How dare we see the dropout as the problem? Is not the real problem that of developing a community of mind, the warm feeling of belongingness, the sureness of identification that all kinds, and we too, need? Is not the real problem to make the school an environment in which each can find himself, and is not the process of finding oneself that of discovering commonality with others? Is not the real problem to throw rich resources of human talent into the task of helping each boy and girl to find a place for himself in his group, and an adequate role in his society?

If your answers to these questions are affirmative, then you have opened the door to other questions. What would be the nature of a school environment that was hospitable to all individuals rather than to just some? What would teaching methods look like that contained experiences that were at the level of "reality" to all boys and girls, and not just some? What would a curriculum organization look like that sought to provide a process of social persuasion whereby a youngster's culture would rid itself of conflict? What would be our source of authority for moral judgment when there is a conflict between what youngsters believe and do, and what we as adults believe should be done? What criteria would we use to evaluate what kinds of achievement, and how would we validate the kinds of achievement that we seek?

And finally, does the literature of our profession provided us with answers to these and other similar questions? I think so, but if the answers are not yours, or the questions perhaps not "realistic" to you, then the final questions become: Why not? Values?

READING COMPETENCY AS A FACTOR IN SCHOOL DROPOUTS

by

Gertrude Crampton

I would like to talk with you today about reading competency in relation to school dropouts. Many professional educators have assumed that there is a definite relationship between the reading ability and the dropout problem; yet, oddly enough, very little research has been done in this area.

I think we might start our discussion by posing a question: Is academic success an important factor in dropping out of school? Obviously, reading skill is involved in academic standing -- although no one, I am sure, is such an enthuiast about reading that he would contend that reading skill is the sole determinant of academic progress.

According to Dillon[1] 69 per cent of the reasons given by dropouts for leaving school were school-responsible. This finding has been supported, although percentage figures vary somewhat. High on the list of reasons dropouts give for leaving school are:

1. Dislike of certain subjects

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[1] Harold J. Dillon, Early School Leavers - A Major Educational Problem, National Child Labor Committee Pamphlet No. 401 (New York: Moak Printing Company, 1949).

2. Repeated tendency toward failure
3. Lack of good teacher-pupil relationships

The Michigan Holding Power Committee in its report[2] identified mental ability, scholastic achievement, and reading level among fourteen factors of school dropout.

I would like to interrupt this stream of facts and figures I'm giving you to bring up some other facts and figures about reading competencies and scholastic success. Monroe[3], some years ago, after a careful analysis of the demands made upon secondary school youth, came to the conclusion that less than 10 per cent of all school activities failed to involve reading. In further studies -- in which, by the way, she was looking for a mathematical, scientifically accurate formula through which a child's reading potential could be projected, she concluded that the only academic area in which success was not affected by reading competency was in the area of pure arithmetical computation.

If you are straining a little on swallowing the idea of the close relationship between skill in reading and academic success, let us pose the unequivocal question: Is reading competency important in the problem of the dropout?

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[2] "Quickie Kit" on School Holding Power, Bulletins #507 (Lansing, Michigan: The Michigan Department of Public Instruction, 1963).

[3] Marian Monroe, Children Who Can Not Read, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932).

Well, we can go back to the Michigan Holding Power Committee's report, in which reading competency was listed among the 14 important factors in school dropout. Or we might refer to Pond's study[4], made in Pennsylvania, in which reading competency was among the top three reasons given for leaving school. And then, of course, there is the work done by George McGee[5] who found that in the non-graduating group 56 per cent were 1 or more years below national norms in reading, and 29 per cent were 2 or more years below national norms, whereas only 5 per cent of the graduating group were 2 or more years below in the national norms in reading.

I would like also to call to your attention to Eckert and Marshall's "When Youth Leave School"[6] which is, as you know, a report of the New York Regents' inquiry into the matter. Of 241 9th-grade dropouts (male) and 272 9th-grade dropouts (female) who were tested in reading and in arithmetic it was found that only 16.6 per cent of the boys and 16.2 per cent of the girls passed (as defined by the regents) in reading and arithmetic; and that 29.0 per cent of the boys and 27.6 per cent of the girls failed both tests. On the other hand, when graduating students were tested--and this occurred in the 12th grade, so that we cannot say the figures are directly comparable--40.1 per cent of the boys and 23.4 per cent of the girls passed in reading and arithmetic; and only 5.3 per cent of the boys and 7.8 per cent of the girls failed in both arithmetic and reading. We might add, here, that reading plays a major role in arithmetic performance as measured by most standardized tests. For example, only roughly 1.6 per cent of the boys and girls, whether graduates or dropouts were able to pass arithmetic while failing in the reading.

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[4] Frederick L. Pond, "Pennsylvania Study of Drop Outs and the Curriculum," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin (March, 1953).

[5] George A. McGee, "We Increased Our Holding Power," National Education Association Journal, XLII (1953).

[6] Ruth E. Eckert and Thomas O. Marshall, When Youth Leave School (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1938) p. 89

Perhaps this would be a good time to bring in a sampling of the opinions of the dropouts themselves. In the California study made by Kitch and McCreary[7] the following question was posed: How well do you feel that your school trained you in reading? Thirty per cent of 1500 dropouts interviewed replied that it was, they thought, satisfactory. Seventy per cent were dissatisfied with the training in reading. But the figures were exactly reversed when 3000 students who had graduated were asked the same questions. Seventy per cent were satisfied, and only 30 per cent were dissatisfied.

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[7] William H. McCreary and Donald E. Kitch, Now Hear Youth, Bulletin of the California State Department of Education, XXII, No. 9 (Sacramento, Calif.: Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1953).

All these figures are fairly interesting straws in the wind; but it must be admitted they are merely straws, and until fairly recently no definite, documented research has been done in which the major problem upon which attention is focused is reading ability and its relation to high school dropouts. What information we have is based upon data picked up more or less in passing while investigators were attempting to determine descriptive and symtomatic characteristics of dropouts and potential dropouts.

There has been, fortunately, one major study made in which great attention was focused upon reading competencies and dropouts. This was done at Battle Creek, Michigan by Ruth Penty[8], and I would like to share some of this research with you--and perhaps engage in a bit of hypothesizing too.

In the Penty study 1169 ninth-graders entering the tenth grade were involved. Of these 593 were "poor" readers and 593 were "good" readers. Perhaps we should define good readers and poor readers. For the purposes of this research, a poor reader was one who, regardless of I.Q., tested in the lower quartile of a standardized reading test. A good reader was one who tested in the upper quartile. The reading battery used was the Iowa Silent Reading Test given immediately upon entering the 10th grade during the years 1947-50.

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[8] Ruth C. Penty, Reading Ability and High School Dropouts (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1956).

You may be interested in the reading-grade-level range that is represented by the terms "lower quartile" and "upper quartile." The poor readers ranged from a reading grade level of 4.3 to 6.9. The good readers ranged from a reading grade level of 9.0 to 13.0 (and I suspect this latter figure results from the fact that this particular battery can not come up with a higher reading).

Penty found that during the subsequent school years, 49.9 per cent of the poor readers dropped out of school and that 14.5 per cent of the good readers left school. Or to put it in reverse, 45.5 per cent of the poor readers graduated, but 81.2 per cent of the good readers graduated. (In case you think I'm slipping on my addition, the unaccounted for percentages represent transfers to other schools.)

I am sure you are wondering--because I always wonder about things like that--why 45.5 per cent of the poor readers stuck it out. I would like to discuss this with you later, but right now I would like you to think about the youngsters who left.

Of those who left, let's see what the distribution is by grade level. In other words, is there a peak for leaving? Let us see how the 49.9 per cent of the poor readers and 14.5 per cent of the good readers distribute themselves:

	Poor Readers	Totals	Good Readers	Totals
During the 10th grade	20.2		1.3	
Upon completion	6.5	26.7	2.22	3.5
During the 11th grade	11.4		5.2	
Upon completion	3.7	15.1	3.6	8.8
During the 12th grade	8.1	8.1	2.2	2.2

It becomes apparent from the distribution that there is indeed a peak period in the dropout of the poor readers. Of the 296 poor readers who dropped out, 53.3 per cent dropped out during or upon completion of the 10th grade, 30 per cent dropped out during or upon completion of the 11th grade.

I think it would be interesting to know something about the dropout records of the parents of these children. Penty did not investigate the matter, but we might do some hypothesizing about this peak period as related to the Maryland report[9]. Dropout parents in this report, at least, had their dropout peak during or upon completion of the ninth grade. One wonders if this was also true in the Battle Creek situation and whether, if true, it had any bearing on the tenth grade peak.

It is interesting to note, that the peak period among good-reader dropouts came during or upon completion of the 11th grade, rather than sometime around the 10th grade. It is also interesting to note that among the poor-reader dropouts, the majority dropped out after the completion of the school year--40 per cent less dropped out during the year than upon completion of the year.

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[9] Percy V. Williams, "Dropouts," National Education Association Journal (February, 1963), 11-12.

It is tempting to assume, turning to a comparison of poor readers who stayed and those who dropped out, that those who stayed were the more intelligent children. Examination of the data from testing does not indicate any truth in the assumption. The Otis Tests of Mental Ability, Intermediate Form A were given to all children during the ninth grade. It is interesting to note that there was no significant statistical difference in the standings, as measured by the tests, of the poor-reader dropouts and the poor-reader stay-ins. In the case of the dropouts the range was 53-116, the median was 84, the interquartile range was 7; in the case of the poor-reader stay-ins, the range was 51-120, the median was 88, and the interquartile range was 7. I cite these figures because I think we all have a tendency to assume that intelligence is the disposing factor, whether we are talking about succeeding or failing in school, whether we are talking about reading well or reading poorly. There is little doubt that intelligence is indeed an important factor in scholastic success, but I think we must avoid a tendency to shrug and say in effect, "Well, what do you expect?" ("The kids are dummies.") We hear this quite often in regard to acquiring reading competency--along with the other delightful remarks guaranteed to irritate: "If the child hasn't learned to read by the time he's 12, you might as well forget him."

I grant you that if we look at the median an I.Q. of 84 doesn't mean we are dealing with an accelerated--student program. But I would like to point out to you that a battery of intelligence tests being used relies heavily upon reading ability. Just as you can't tell the players if you haven't got a program, so in testing of this kind, you can't have an I.Q. if you can't read. Therefore, I think it fair to assume that the median I.Q. was higher than indicated.

I suggest, too, that we re-examine the oft-quoted--and true--statement that there is a high positive correlation between intelligence and reading ability. It seems to me that its implication is that there is a high positive correlation between intelligence and potential reading ability.

There are a couple of formulas for estimating children's potential in reading. I mentioned Monroe's[10] work previously. The drawback, of course, is that children must be tested individually and the formula figured individually. For a fast--and admittedly, rough--estimate of potential, (if we accept the concept of generally high, positive correlation between reading ability, whether being demonstrated or not, and intelligence), we need only translate I.Q. into intelligence grade placement, then translate reading scores into reading grade placement, and compare the two. I admit this is a crude technique-but I contend that the error will usually lie in the direction of an estimated potential that is too low, since group intelligence tests, which are what we usually have to work with, tend to depend upon reading skill.

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[10] Monroe, op.cit.

I would like to remind you of Betts's findings[11] that only roughly 20 per cent of retarded readers (and here Betts uses "retarded" to mean reading substantially below grade level) are reading substantially below grade level because of intelligence.

I am delighted to see a new concept of "reading retardate" developing. More and more specialists are contending that the reading retardate is the child who is reading substantially below his potential; whereas the child who is reading at or near his potential, regardless of the school grade in which he finds himself, is a tremendous success. Thus, according to my philosophy, if a child has a reading potential of 4.5 and is reading at, say, 4.3 he is no retardate, whether he is in the second grade, the fourth grade, or the ninth grade.

If we examine the Battle Creek intelligence test results[12] as crude indices of reading potential, we come up with evidence far more important to us as teachers than a median I.Q. of 84. Of the poor-readers dropouts, 70 per cent had the mental capacity to read at sixth-grade level or better. Of the poor-reader graduates, 84 per cent had the capacity to read at sixth-grade level or better. I might point out that you can do a lot of "livin' and learnin'" with a sixth-grade reading level. And I point out further that the percentages given do not indicate those who could have been reading at a sixth-grade level, but those who could have been reading at sixth-grade level or better.

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[11] Emmett A. Betts, Foundations of Reading Instruction (New York: American Book Co., 1957).

[12] Penty, op.cit.

Again using our translation of I.Q. to intelligence grade placement as an indication of reading potential, we find that of the poor readers, whether dropouts or stay-ins, less than 4 per cent had fulfilled their potential for reading competency.

Let's get around to the poor-reader stay-ins. Why did they stay and graduate? They were not more intelligent than the dropouts; thus, intelligence cannot be considered the deciding factor in the decision. They couldn't read any better--and they hadn't received any help in reading skills. Forty per cent stated that they had expressed a desire for help; 73 per cent of the entire group, whether they had asked for help or not, had received no help. The students who graduated were interviewed about their reasons for staying, and the reasons given were: the support, understanding, and encouragement of the parents; private drive; determination to complete high school; enjoyment of certain clubs, activities, subjects, teachers.

Thus, again we are faced with the understanding that there is no single reason for youth's decision to drop out of school. But we must conclude from the data of Penty's study that reading competency is an important factor in the dropout problem. The conclusion is supported by follow-up interviews with graduates and non-graduates. Seventy per cent stated that they would have enjoyed school more if they had been helped in reading. Eighty-five per cent stated that they were reading more "on the outside."

They were also interviewed about their reasons for leaving school--so that a comparison might be made with the reasons given at the time of leaving. Along these lines, I recommend a healthy cynicism about exit reasons given. Many children decide to give a socially acceptable reason--maybe because they want to be courteous; maybe because they have the idea they can't get out unless they do come up with an acceptable reason. You might be interested in the report made by Olive Jones[13].

When the poor-reader dropouts were interviewed about why they had dropped out, now that they were free and clever, a somewhat altered series of reasons emerged: frequent academic failure; reading difficulty; lack of school friends; non-participation in school activities (90 per cent had not participated for various reasons); feeling inferior because of poor performance in school subjects; finances; home security; family history of dropouts. It is interesting to note that all reasons given for disliking subjects--English, History, and other content subjects--involved a reading skill.

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[13] Olive Jones, Study of Official and Pupil Stated Reasons for Dropouts. (Florida: 1956).

My point of view about reading is filled with bias, but I would like to share it--since I would like you to be biased, too. Does help help? At the present time we have little or no data which gives us the answer to this question, and I am not sure that anyone knows how to go about answering it. Certainly, if we value remarks made by dropouts, we must conclude that it is a major responsibility of the school to provide help in reading. It is true that emotional factors are important in the school dropout but we cannot escape our responsibility by isolating and pointing to factors in the home which fail to provide a climate in which children can develop into stable young people. It is essential to confront ourselves, and recognize in this self-confrontation, that many of the emotional factors are developed right in the school or are at least reinforced in the school. Among the emotional factors are: feelings of inadequacy, of not-belonging, of lack of success Over and over again, in a variety of ways, not only in Penty's study but in every study, if we had but the wit to hear what they say, children who leave school and children who remain in school despite a reading handicap told us they feel inadequate because they cannot read well.

The point is sometimes made that help should have been given in the earlier grades. I am sure this is true. But reading instruction and help must be continued into the secondary school. The need for this instruction is portrayed, regardless of the study, by the remarks of both those who persisted and those who dropped out and is demonstrated by Penty's figures, which indicate that 84 per cent of the poor readers were not reading at their potential. So long as a child is not reading somewhere close to his capabilities the school must assist him. I contend that we must not wait until the child is in the secondary school to help him. But I contend with equal fervor that we must not take the attitude that instruction in the reading skills is the function of the elementary school and not the concern of the secondary school.

Those who state with quiet detachment that practically all children learn to read sometime between birth and the age of twenty-one do children a grave disservice in their implication that no persistent effort should be made to help children. For they thereby condone for children with reading handicaps years of emotional upset and disturbance which are the inevitable result of feeling inadequate, unsuccessful, and disenfranchised.

6 The question is often raised about the emotional stability of children who are handicapped in reading: Do the emotional problems cause the reading difficulty, or do the reading difficulties cause the emotional problems? This is an interesting academic problem, good for several hours of discussion when one feels a need for intellectual exercise. It makes a good modern substitute for the question which so fascinated our forebears some centuries ago: How many angels can stand on the head of a pin? The important thing is that a child who is reading substantially below his own potential carries

with him, usually, frustration and accompanying emotional problems. Unless there are active stabilizing factors in his environment, whether it be school or home environment, the extent of emotional involvement and repercussion, it seems to me, is affected by the extent of the reading disability and by the length of time it persists. Thus, prompt diagnosis and constructive procedures to help him are essential.

When reading difficulty persists into the secondary school, who helps becomes increasingly important. The Who who helps must have knowledge and skill in the area of developing reading competency; but he must also have awareness, acceptance, and skill in working with the emotional impact of years of frustration. He must not only be skillful enough to help the disabled child in the crippled reading abilities, he must also be skilled in helping the child overcome emotional deterrents to reading competency. To do less is to disenfranchize the child. Stealing blatantly from Havighurst, I contend that the who who helps must indeed by a significant teacher.

THE ROLE OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

and NEW PROGRAMS FOR DROPOUTS

by
Bert Greene

There are several assumptions I should like to make before getting into the topic under discussion. These assumptions underlie much of what we have been talking about for the past week and a half. Furthermore, these assumptions allow for the rejection of the ideas to come if you do not "buy" these assumptions.

Assumptions

1. The school cannot be all things to all people.
2. The school is but one agency of a vast social complex.
3. There is no single solution for the dropout problem.
4. The school is the only agency in society that has access to all the children while change is still possible.
5. The school alone cannot solve the dropout problem, but it can be the focal point.
6. The role of the school in our society is not static or simple; it changes as society changes, it mirrors the values in our culture, and it assumes new responsibilities to the extent that a community is willing to support these responsibilities.

7. "Disadvantaged youth," "culturally deprived," "underprivileged," "alienated," "disaffected," or whatever other term is used to describe these children oversimplify a very complex problem.

Now that I have stated my assumptions, I can proceed to discuss the role of the elementary school.

The elementary teacher must recognize that he is only one of many environmental forces in a student's life. He does not have complete control over all the forces that affect a student and must reconcile himself to working only with those forces over which he does have control.

Developmental Tasks

One approach that the elementary teacher can take is a developmental one. That is, to help the student to understand himself and his environment. The teacher can help students think through their problems with school work and school personnel. Furthermore, teachers can allow youngsters to accept more of the responsibilities and privileges of the decision-making process. In contrast to the typical student government activity, where one adult can veto the decision of the entire student body, the elementary school should provide some situations where the decisions and the responsibility for these decisions are left to the students. Obviously, this must be an area in which the staff has no vested interest and will truly allow the students a freedom of choice. This type of situation can and should be provided for individual students as well as student groups.

The development of responsibility need not exist only in extra-curricular or co-curricular activities. Creative teachers can find many ways to help children develop this kind of responsibility with reference to subject-matter areas. It should be noted that responsibility is but one side of democracy. Youngsters who are given the opportunity to develop responsible habits must also be allowed to enjoy the privileges of their actions. Thus, whereas responsibility is one side of the coin, privilege is the other side.

Identifying Potential Dropouts

Perhaps the major role of the elementary school is that of identification of potential dropouts. Many educators and people who have done research on the dropout believe that the potential dropout can be identified early in his school career, at least by the third or fourth grade.

As we live through this workshop together, we will learn more about the characteristics of dropouts. These characteristics provide us with clues which may be used for purposes of identification. Although our techniques for prediction are not 100 per cent accurate, it has been estimated that use of these characteristics can help predict who will drop out with about 80 per cent accuracy.

Providing for Individual Differences

The elementary school is probably in the best position to attempt to meet individual needs. At this level, youngsters are still willing to admit their deficiencies and accept help. The older they get, the more difficulty teachers have in working with them.

If we accept the position that good teaching should increase the differences between students rather than to make them all alike, it is imperative that we attempt to handle individual differences. This implies that the teacher must be sensitive to the needs of his students and should attempt to provide for these needs within the structure of his class.

Remedial Programs

More will be said later about remedial programs. At this point, let us simply note that these programs can never be successful unless individual differences are taken into account. Homogeneous grouping per se can not solve the problem.

Provide Meaningful Tasks

School work in and of itself is not very interesting. Unless youngsters see a need now for what they are learning, they merely accept on faith the teacher's word that what they study today will be useful in the future. It is up to us as teachers to be able to show youngsters why what we attempt to teach them is important. This does not mean we must preach pious statements, rather, it means we must work at making school meaningful for the students.

Field Trips Must be Need-Related

The practice of taking field trips is common today. However, field trips are not always planned to build the experiential background of students. In the discussion of new programs, note the difference between the field trips in usual elementary schools and those in special schools.

Time does not permit a complete inventory of practices that elementary schools can engage in for the prevention of school dropouts. However, the discussion of new programs presents us with some evidence of programs which appear to be successful.

To conclude this portion, it seems to me that I've said that the role of the elementary school in this problem area is twofold. First, the process of identification must be undertaken. Secondly, preventive programs must be initiated and maintained.

THE IMPACT OF GUIDANCE ON THE DROPOUT PROBLEM

by
Winton Kloosterman

The topic which I am to discuss with you presents me with a difficult task. I shall admit that my own thinking is confused in these areas. The specific separation of guidance and its effect on education and the effect of guidance on the dropout problem is a very difficult, if not impossible, distinction for me. I, therefore, shall be discussing material relating guidance to education. I shall leave it up to you to determine to what extent the things I say apply to the dropout problem.

It might be well to clarify certain basic concepts before tackling the issue before us. The three items I wish to bring to your attention are: the guidance principle, guidance services and/or programs, and guidance counseling. As we look at these three concepts it is well to point out that there is considerable confusion regarding them in contemporary educational thought. It is my own viewpoint that they are separate and distinct concepts, but I am sure that not all educational thought or practices are in agreement with my position. My point is that the guidance principle is a basic underlying principle in human relations, and as such it has meaning in the education of students, from the classroom to the superintendent to the college professor. Good guidance principles are effective educational techniques. When we talk about guidance services we are talking about testing programs, record systems, co-curricular programs and other similar services designed to make school pertinent to individuals. These kinds of services and programs are rapidly becoming an accepted part of the educational scene. Counseling is that aspect of guidance referring to a very special kind of educational need, usually involving a face-to-face relationship between a counselor and a student. This counseling service has as its purpose aiding the individual in his adjustment to school life. Such a service is critical to students and teachers who find the school setting unrewarding to them.

As we look at the above concepts I believe it is clear that they are not of the same fabric. Present educational thought would do well to clarify the confusion that exists. All too frequently, we have guidance services which completely ignore guidance principles, or to illustrate further, there are times in which guidance practices fail to utilize guidance services and/or individual guidance counseling. If guidance is to be a unique and productive educational function it must include all of the above concepts.

The unique and significant contribution of guidance to education centers around the place of the individual in the learning process. Guidance has put the individual in the center of the educational process. Education cannot be considered an adequately functioning process unless something positive happens to the individual involved. The change from a concept of dissemination of knowledge to a concept of total individual growth and maturation reflects the essence of the guidance viewpoint. People who hold this point of view see the role of the teacher as a person who guides the growth of a youngster rather than merely acting as a transmitter of knowledge. It has changed the concept of learning from an acquisition of knowledge to the concept of the development of potential. It seems to me that guidance principles have been at the core of these very basic revolutionary changes in education.

Out of this concern with the individual, guidance has brought into the educational picture data records on family and academic background; data which are enlightening in a very personal sense. More than this, the guidance concept has developed the means by which an objective judgment of each individual is possible. Chief among these guidance instruments are the standardized testing devices. These devices, while fallible in many instances, are a big improvement in assisting counselors in their work with youngsters and teachers. Beyond the standardized test devices we are also rapidly developing rating scales, check lists, inventories, and similar instruments which give specificity to our judging procedures. In so doing, we are taking from our judgments of people the highly subjective and moralistic facets which have plagued education for many years. Those of us in guidance are convinced that highly moralistic and judgmatical approaches to behavior have not materially improved behavior. The objective and analytical data which guidance produced has put us on firm ground in our work with young folks. The very work that we are pursuing in this workshop is, to a very large degree, the result of data collected from individual dropouts. The highly developed record systems and the general acceptability of individual measurement is a tribute to the guidance services now existing in American schools. Without it little progress could be made in the vital areas of education, of which the dropout is only one problem.

In many cases, the most effective work with young people who have found school an unrewarding experience has been through individual counseling. In individual counseling, the counselor completely accepts the individual and in so doing establishes a relationship enabling great personal understanding and growth. Effective counseling aids youth in laying the groundwork necessary for productive learning. It is a major contribution to individual growth and adjustment to the learning situation. While counseling prevails in many degrees, its most effective contribution is in the formation of goals and support of each youngster as he seeks to reach his goal.

With respect to the importance of guidance on the dropout problem, two significant factors immediately appear. First, is the fact that data are available. We have heard considerable statistics and research quoted in this workshop. Without guidance much of this research would not be available to us. In other words, one of the most apparent results of guidance services is the availability of data on problems such as the dropout. While it would be a mistake to stop with data, such data are the basis for effective study in areas such as the dropout.

A second significant contribution of guidance is the nature of interpretation of behavior. Such a utilization of guidance concepts interprets non-typical behavior as symptomatic. Without guidance concepts we could easily interpret problems such as the dropout as a matter of logistics or economics. The utilization of guidance concepts helps us to understand the problem in terms of the human factors. We are not only looking at the dropout problem, we are studying the dropout as a person. This person represents a failure of the educational system. The behavior of this person tells us that some place there is a gap between his needs and the service that the schools are providing. The person who subscribes to the concept of guidance knows that we shall not solve this problem until we understand this gap. While a mechanistic and legalistic approach may compel school attendance, it has not solved the human problem. Only as education builds on firmly established guidance principles and avidly seeks to meet individual needs does it make progress toward solving human problems. Dropping out of school is certainly the kind of problem to which we are referring.

There is no generalization which can apply to the dropout problem. Each dropout has his own interpretation of school and why it is not a productive experience for him. If we are to be productive in our work as educators we must know the reasons why school is not a satisfying experience for some youngsters. If we study the dropout problem and understand the causal factors that prevail in case after case, we are making a contribution to the professional growth of educational personnel. Guidance, then, is not only a means of studying students, but a means by which we in the profession can grow in our professional competency.

Let us talk a moment about the counselor as a person and his contribution to the educational process. All too frequently his contributions are those of a mechanistic or superficial nature. Counselors who keep attendance books, sell cafeteria tickets, and supervise study halls are making a contribution far less than their capabilities. Counselors have a unique and significant contribution to make to education. However, they must be free to do so. Only when they have an opportunity to work individually with students can they manifest complete acceptance of these individuals. By aiding these students in making a more adequate adjustment to life, counselors are providing a unique and significant contribution to the education of youngsters. There is ample research to support the concept of learning by imitation. Effective counselors, in their acceptance of others, become a model for students. Counselors who accept people regardless of their human qualities give others a basis for accepting a counselor and his attributes. This is a unique service which counselors can provide.

By way of closing it is perhaps well to caution you that guidance has limitations. These limitations are basically those of the people who use the concepts. A good functioning guidance principle has great promise; how successful it will be depends on the people who are using it. It is, therefore incumbent upon us as people seeking to improve our professional competency to improve our guidance skills. I am encouraged by what I have seen in this workshop. We are well on the way to a functional guidance process which will make major contributions in the effectiveness of educational programs.

NEW PROGRAMS FOR DROPOUTS

The purpose of this section is to describe some of the programs being tried in various schools throughout the country. It is impossible to do this section complete justice because of time limitations. Therefore, I will not distinguish between elementary and secondary programs, nor will I identify the school system using a specific approach. In a sense, the following is a composite of all programs being tried.

It is interesting to note that all of the programs are experimental. Just what this means is not clear. I think it means that schools are trying something new, but are not prepared to commit themselves at this time to a rigid evaluation.

Although the objectives of the various schools differ somewhat, an examination of the programs indicates that these are the most common objectives:

1. To raise achievement levels of the children.
2. To motivate each child so that he will want to do his best.
3. To build strong ties and better understanding between school and home.

Increased Services

The addition of visiting teachers, counselors, child health workers, elementary guidance workers, advisors, and tutor teachers is common. These people usually attempt to work with individual students or small groups. The emphasis is placed on improved diagnostic and consultant services.

Faculty Seminars

This is a form of in-service training. These seminars are held to help the staff work with potential dropouts. Outstanding leaders in psychology and child development are brought into the school to participate in these seminars. In this way, teachers are presented with an opportunity for additional child study.

These seminars not only deal with the general characteristics of youngsters and the special needs of underprivileged youth, but also provide time for planning how to work with these youth. Thus, the seminar is more than simply a talking session.

Remedial Programs

These programs are usually related to the basic skills. There are remedial programs in reading, arithmetic, and the language arts. Reading clinics and consultants usually supplement the program, and tutor or coaching teachers are sometimes utilized.

Reduced Class Size

It is not at all unusual to find that classes for underprivileged youth have fewer students than the usual classes. Recognition that a smaller class allows the teacher to spend more time with individual students is a based proposition. These classes generally contain 15-20 students.

Revised Testing Program

In addition to the usual school wide group testing program, it is not unusual to find testing on an individual basis. The basis for this is the assumption that the I.Q. is not an accurate measure of the potential for an underprivileged youth, that the tests are not culture free, and that underprivileged youth are not fairly evaluated. The revised testing program focuses on the individual rather than a group and utilizes a variety of testing devices.

Block of Time

Block of time classes are quickly becoming popular for use with underprivileged youth. In this situation, students will remain with one teacher for as long as four hours per day. They leave this teacher only for Art, Music, Physical Education, and Shop.

The rationale for this program is that the teacher is the heart of the program; good guidance is best done by the teacher, and the students can develop a stronger feeling of security by remaining with one teacher.

Compensatory Education

Compensatory education rests on the principle that equal educational opportunity may not be enough for the underprivileged youth. Thus, these youth attend classes which are smaller in size, attend schools which have received additional allowances for library books and supplies, and take more field trips than other students.

Outside Speakers

One technique used to motivate these youth is to bring to the class successful persons who came from underprivileged homes. It is hoped that a series of talks by these resource people will provide underprivileged youth with sufficient examples of people who are not unlike themselves. The message these people usually carry is: You too can be successful.

Ability Grouping

Some schools have moved in the direction of ability grouping or tracks. The assumption underlying this approach is that pupils can be identified and grouped according to their potential, and teachers can function more effectively if they did not have to contend with a variety of individuals with differing intelligence levels.

Tutorial Service

One technique for providing tutorial help is to utilize parents, college students, and high school students. This service is usually offered after school hours.

Community Involvement

An "all-out" effort is being made to bring parents into the schools. A variety of techniques are used. These include: seminars for parents, after-school classes, using parents in the classroom as teacher helpers, having teachers visit homes, and hiring social workers to function as school - community agents. This is a real attempt on the part of the schools to involve parents in the education of their children.

Field Trips

The field trips for these youth are carefully planned to add to the experiences that educators feel are necessary for school success. These field experiences are one means of attempting to overcome cultural handicaps. These trips include tours of museums, art galleries, cultural activities, colleges and universities, scientific laboratories, plays, symphonies, and the opera.

Modified Curriculum

The curriculum in some secondary schools has been modified to permit these youth to take additional work in vocational areas. In some cases, students may elect as many as three hours of shop courses in an attempt to involve them in meaningful learning experiences.

Work-study

This program provides students with an opportunity to work part-time and to attend school the other part. This is an attempt to build school experiences around the work experience of youth. In the elementary schools, there is a project called "chores for children." This program has as its objective getting elementary youth odd jobs.

Discussion Seminars for Potential Dropouts

These are seminars set up to allow potential dropouts an opportunity for free discussion. In these seminars, potential dropouts can discuss some of their problems and possible solutions.

Enrichment Programs

These programs, usually held after school, supplement the school program. Some of the activities in the enrichment program include creative writing, folk singing and dancing, poetry reading, story telling, and puppet shows.

Pre-school Program

Underprivileged youth are offered the opportunity to develop and increase their basic skills. This program is essentially an extension of the regular school program.

SUMMARY

It should be noted that none of these attempts to provide for underprivileged youth is new. Many of these programs have been tried before with other groups of youngsters. Now, these programs are "spruced up," renamed, and put into operation for potential dropouts.

The one essential ingredient of all successful programs is missing from the literature. If one reads between the lines, it will be noted that the basis for any successful program with potential dropouts is that the teachers accept these youth on their own terms, a situation not usually found in many schools.

THE DROPOUT: A COMMUNITY PROBLEM

by

Gordon Fielder

The most important part of the dropout problem is undoubtedly the quest for solutions. And as is true of most complex questions, that quest is most likely to be fruitless if it goes in a single direction, or if it seeks simple answers. Rather, the search for answers must go in many directions, and seek many solutions to the multiple formulations of the problem that will likely emerge from its study.

A good example of this might be provided by an analysis of the relevancy of the curriculum to the dropout problem. This is without question one of the directions that a search for answers must take. A curriculum that is narrowly conceived, that is largely divorced from the realistic life of the community, that lacks meaning to the individual as he moves through life situations insistent in their demands upon him, and that is taught in a formal and ritualistic manner is one of the main causes of school dropout. But, however important it is to identify it as a factor in dropouts, it is only one, and to make it the only culprit - or even the main one - is to falsify the problem.

If the school is serious in proposing to do something about dropouts, it must look at the problem in its broadest implications. It must in the end be conceived as a community problem, appreciated as one in which the community has a stake, and understood as a problem calling for total community involvement in providing realistic solutions. Just as curriculum revision calls for a capacity to create and endure change, the marshalling of community resources calls for a restatement of purposes through which our professional energies are to be released, and perhaps a reconceptualization of the role of the school itself. What are some of these new purposes, or as we might call them here, new frontiers of school service?

One of these is the need for the coordination of all youth services provided by the community. Every community has several and sometimes numerous associations of individuals comprising agencies and organizations that touch the lives of children and youth. Many of these are eager to extend their influence and would welcome assistance in effective achievement of their worthy purposes. Examples of these are business men's service clubs; fraternal organizations; the Community Chest and other charitable organizations; Boy Scouts and Girs Scouts; youth recreation centers and park services; governmental and private employment agencies; courts of law; and related juvenile services such as probation supervision, police, and church youth groups. Many times agencies such as these and others provide a duplication of services that is wasteful and needless, and many times agencies are at cross-purposes and conflict in their efforts to serve youth falling in their province of concern.

There is a serious need in most communities for coordination of these services and the organizations responsible for them. What better agency is there than the school to provide this coordination? For one thing, it is the only community agency that touches the lives of all youth at one time or other. For another, in itself it is an association of child welfare oriented people. It is well equipped in human and plant resources to call a meeting of representatives of these various agencies to assess the need for closer cooperation, and to suggest and help staff a structure such as a Community Council as a vehicle for that cooperation. Would the closer coordination of community-wide youth services be of help in dealing with the dropout problem, and is this a new frontier of school service? I believe so!

Another frontier is the school's posture to the community as a world of work. Not only might the curriculum be enriched so as to provide in-school youth with creditable work experience such as has been pioneered in programs of distributive education and diversified occupations, but it might also extend itself into job placement and follow-up. Would it not be a worthy expression of the school's service philosophy, and a realistically attainable achievement within that philosophy, to do this? Would it not be a good thing to include in the termination interview an invitation to use the school as an aid in getting the first full-time job, and might not there be fewer such interviews for reason of dropping out if the individual knew such services waited for him at the end of a work-relevant program of school study?

And why limit our school's service philosophy with job placement? Is not follow-up of the individual also desirable? Is this not the way to evaluation of our efforts, the way to improve ourselves and our programs, and the way to define new educational needs? If your answer to these questions is affirmative, as is mine, then we open the door to yet another frontier. Not only would job upgrading and the development of programs of on-the-job training in cooperation with employers become a proper goal of the school, but other realistic adult education programs would as well. As the community began to identify the school as the human resource that is its potential through the provision of services such as these, it would, I believe, see it as a proper place to seek growth experiences relevant to the rich fabric of adult living represented in that community. Hat making, fly tying, and photography -- to be sure, but also, home financing, consumer buying, insurance planning -- and what else? Let us not make the decision; let the community decide.

Another frontier that is suggested by this line of thought, but that is important enough to merit separate comment, is the opportunity for the school to develop community wide guidance and counseling services. Provision of these services on an adequate basis within the school is something yet to be achieved; however, it is conceptually too self-limiting to see this as the extent of need. Just as we are providing ourselves with this needed service, so too is the community; only here the struggle is greater. We are reminded on every hand of the shortage of such qualified professional persons as psychiatrists and clinical psychologists. Yet, when we consider publicly supported services for all, we deal with a vacuum, for these are practically absent. Again, the question becomes one of deciding what the school should and can do about it. Is it not one of the purposes of the community school to provide such services? If your answer is no, let me ask you what it is that we mean when we talk of family life education for young people, and why do we conclude that we have no responsibility beyond the diploma? What do we mean when we talk of parent-teacher conferences? Is this not guidance of parents? Is it not important to counsel the parent of the potential dropout? And how dare we ignore the challenge in the idea that the best school is the one that extends its influence in the lives of people everywhere?

Personal, marriage, parent and family counseling - this is a frontier. So too, is leadership in the development of community wide youth recreation programs. We are all familiar with the lament that youth are promiscuous and daring in their recreational behaviors, and that their readiness to be so has been nicely paced by opportunity. Discounting the ever-present tendency of the adult to see in youthful behavior the persistent predilection to abrogate the moral norm while forgetting his own earlier wild oats, there is unquestionably a need for healthful youth play that is at the same time attractive by his standards. The gun club, drag strip, the camping experience -- could these serve as examples? But more particularly, could the school give leadership in building cooperation between parents, and parents with school, in assessing whatever problem exists and in developing ways of dealing with it that does not do unreasonable violence to the norms of the peer group culture? Would attractive play outlets sponsored by the school make the school more attractive to the potential dropout?

Perhaps the foregoing will now permit a sharper delineation of the final and true frontier for the school to face, and that is to help the community develop a feeling of identity and an awareness of self. The community is not just an association of people providing each other services in a geographical area with a continuous boundary, it is also a community of mind and spirit. It is the warm feeling of belonging and the security of acceptance; it is the feeling of "ours," "we," and "us." Finally, through these things and only through them, it is the sense of personal identity and the adequate awareness of self -- "I," "me," "myself." Only through knowing who you are can I know who I am.

Further, the community that is aware of itself is one that has provided itself with processes for the continuous reconstruction of outlook, while maintaining a reasonable degree of unity in viewpoint and expectation. But this is not the community of the Negro ghetto, of socio-economic class bias, and other intolerable forms of building psychological distance between people. To deal with these forces that set people apart from one another, that makes the community amorphous and in the end destroys it, this is the real frontier of the community school and the real dimension of the problem of which the dropout is only one expression. The healthy community provides adequately for all, for only so can it know itself, and in providing adequately for all, including the dropout, we find the delineation of the main problem.

The contribution of the community school, then, is to help the community find itself. By bringing people of all kinds into communication with themselves in the service of purposes real to them, in persistently providing people with opportunities for them to reconstruct social experience in meaningful ways, by consistently giving leadership in the discovery, and perhaps redirection, of the goals of interrelated living -- this is the school grabbing for the main chance.

Indeed, this role of the school seems large and difficult to me as I am sure it does to you. But the task of education of the youthful and immature of a society has always been a large and difficult one. Just as in the end the dropout emerges as a social phenomenon instead of a problem individual, so the solution to the problem of what to do with him becomes the building of a community where he can find a place for himself, and in so doing, come to know who and what he is.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS AND COMMUNITY

by
George Brower

It should always be remembered that in our society parents have the primary responsibility for their children and all aspects of their development. Whether this is their education, religious training, health and physical development, or any other phase of their development.

Much of the research indicates limited or no success in educating children against the wishes of their parents. Especially, research in attitude change is significant in pointing this out. Also, much of the personal experience of teachers when summarized is indicative of the need to have parental cooperation. It would indicate then, that parental education in the direction of educational objectives and getting children reading to learn is a basic requirement for successfully educating children and keeping them in school. Further, research already cited in discussing socio-economic factors related to school holding power[1] provides further clues that home and community background are important variables in student performance.

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[1] Socio-Economic Characteristics of Dropouts, pp.

Parent responsibilities in this report will be discussed under two major headings:

1. Getting the child ready for school.
2. Maintaining positive and effective relationships with the school and teacher.

GETTING THE CHILD READY FOR SCHOOL

Pre-school experiences have been related to school success in several parts of this publication. Significant areas include: Developing in the child an adequate self-concept. The significance of the self concept has been pointed out by researchers in other areas notably, Juvenile Delinquency by Reckless[2] and Creativity by Torrance[3]. In essence, it suggests that a "good" boy has a "good" boy concept and distinguishes him from other boys who do not fit the category. Also, "I can" self concepts are related to success in school while "I can't" concepts are related to failure in school. Thus, the youngster who believes he is capable of performing a task is more likely to succeed at that task than a youngster who does not see the possibility for success.

Developing in the child a set of positive attitudes toward learning school, and teachers. Research on motivation has pointed up the importance of goals in accord with learning tasks and also the benefits of positive and pleasant situations in performance. In addition, research has pointed out the disadvantages in ambivalent reactions as they affect learning negatively.

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[2] Walter C. Reckless, The Crime Problem (New York: Appleton-Century Croffs, Inc. 1950).

[3] Paul E. Torrance, Guiding Creative Talent (Englwood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1962).

Equipping the home so that it is an adequate educational environment for the child. This includes not only books, magazines and other educational materials, but making the home and family a teaching-learning situation. Homes where (1) children are read to; (2) significant issues are discussed, facts are used, and decisions reached; (3) education takes priority over entertainment in use of mass media; (4) worthwhile ideas from periodicals are recognized and the sources are pointed out; (5) travel is both educational and entertaining; (6) plans for education are important and not left to the child at his discretion; and (7) ideas from teachers, books, and other educational resources are recognized as valuable will make for better performance and better ideas of what one can get from learning in school. The child will have satisfied his desire to know by getting answers from materials and people he will be working with in school.

MAINTAINING POSITIVE AND EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH SCHOOL AND TEACHER

Much can be said to establish the necessity for positive relationships with the school and teacher as a basis for transmitting favorable attitudes toward education and teachers to children. It must be further recognized that educational planning is a cooperative effort of teachers and parents, school and community involving use of all of the information of both parents and teachers if it is to be effective. Parental assistance in getting the student to adopt desirable and realistic goals and to accept teachers is also a necessity in effective learning.

A final necessity here is the development of a positive, regular, frequent, and consistent relationship with the child involving good two-way communication so that the child's education and his decisions and problems regarding education can be discussed within a framework of mutual acceptance and concern. Research in this area is limited and the hypothesis that greater interest and concern for children and education on the part of parents is positively correlated with better performance requires further study. It is, however, in accord with motivation theory and sociological theory. The importance of maintaining effective performance can only be established when adequate indices of parent-child relationships are a beginning, but time spent together is only one aspect of a good parent-child relationship.

Community Responsibility

Brunner[4] has defined a community as a cooperative enterprise in which everyone has a role. Education as a major institution in the community could be similarly defined. Education is a total community responsibility, and where this is realized we generally find better and more realistic educational programs than in communities that rely almost entirely on the school for educational planning and services. Some educational responsibilities of community members include:

a. Support of education by all community agencies.

b. Selecting and supporting best possible leadership for lay boards.

c. Willingness to support education in accord with the position we give it in the total value system.

d. Keeping up with educational practices or respecting the responsibility of those who do. Members must also play a dominant role in planning for education and respecting the specialized training of teachers and other educators.

e. Structure the community and plan community activities in support of school and home and avoid any possible activity or organization that would seriously hamper the school or home from performing its function.

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[4] Edmund Brunner and Wilbur C. Hallenbeck, American Society: Urban and Rural Patterns (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955).

f. Maintain the community so that it is conducive to education. This includes provisions for adequate housing, library facilities, and community facilities for bringing educational resources into the community.

There is further evidence that broader involvement by the community in education, both in planning for education for youth and also in participation in adult education, is related to more positive feelings about education. In summary, education is the responsibility of parents and the community as well as the responsibility of the school.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

by

Bert Greene

There are few schools which do not have dropouts. Although the number of dropouts vary from school district to school district, nearly every school recognizes the dropout as a major educational problem. This concern about the dropout has resulted in many research studies. The results of these studies provide some clues about dropouts. The following are some of the characteristics which distinguish the dropouts from the high school graduates:

Sex - More males than females leave school before graduation. Out of every 100 dropouts, approximately 60 are males and 40 are females.

Intelligence - While the dropouts do not score quite as high on intelligence tests as do graduates, most dropouts are sufficiently intelligent to be educated profitably in our schools.

A study in Maryland[1], for example, found that 49 per cent of the dropouts had an I.Q. which was average or above average.

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[1] Percy V. Williams, "Dropouts," National Education Association Journal (Feb., 1963), 11-12.

Failure - Most dropouts are failing when they leave school. Many of them have failed before. Most failures occur in the first, second, eighth and ninth grades.

Reading - More poor readers than good readers drop out of high school. Dropouts are sometimes two full years behind in reading.

Attendance - There is more truancy among dropouts than among graduates.

Transfer - Dropouts show a history of more transfers from one school to another than graduates.

School Activities - There is little or no participation in school activities, such as, clubs or sports, among dropouts.

Family - Many dropouts come from broken homes (divorce) or homes where the parents do not get along too well with each other. In addition, the parents themselves do not have much education. One study revealed that four out of five parents of dropouts were dropouts themselves.[2]

Friends - The dropout tends to have few friends in school, associates with older youngsters, and often displays a feeling of not "belonging."

Dissatisfaction With School - This is the reason dropouts most often give for leaving school. Sometimes the dropout means he has difficulty with his teacher, sometimes he means he needs more help than he is getting, sometimes he means he does not like his courses, and sometimes he means he is failing.

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[2] Ibid.

It is important to recognize that no single factor listed above is responsible for all the dropouts. It is entirely possible for a youngster to have one or more of the above characteristics and still graduate from high school. However, a realization that these are characteristics of dropouts can assist teachers and parents in meeting the special needs of a youngster.

Teachers and administrators can be proud that they have been their own most severe critics. Many of their criticisms have resulted in improvement in the education of our youth and the increase of holding power in schools. Almost all schools have made some changes in their programs in an attempt to provide every youngster with a high school education. Many of these changes are seen in the addition of such courses as art, music, dramatics, debate, various shop courses, homemaking, typing, shorthand, and other business subjects.

Most high schools today make some attempt to provide for the unique needs of each student. There are usually special courses for the youngster who is having trouble with reading. This is often true for arithmetic, too. For the youngster who is academically advanced, special accelerated courses are often provided. These are only a few of the examples of the special provisions made for youngsters in academic subjects.

In addition, many schools have initiated various programs in vocational training. The emphasis in these programs is on skill development in a specific trade. Every attempt is made to keep these programs as realistic and meaningful as possible. The basis for many of these programs is the recognition of different interests and abilities of students. By offering a special program for the youngster who is not going to college, the public schools admit their responsibility for the education of all youth.

Early Identification - Several schools recognize that the potential dropout can be identified in the elementary school and have started a program to do so early in their school career. Once such youngsters are identified, special programs can be initiated to help them. Careful attention to their special needs might prevent them from becoming dropouts.

Teachers - One of the most important factors in the school is the teacher. Every school attempts to employ highly qualified teachers. These are teachers who have successfully completed a program of training, including experience in working with youngsters. Most schools supplement this training with a program of in-service training. This activity provides teachers with an opportunity to discuss special problems, share ideas, develop special programs and activities, and up-date their teaching. An understanding and competent teacher is a major factor in preventing school dropouts.

School Activities - Recognizing the importance of providing varied programs, schools have developed many activities to supplement the school program. There are various athletic teams, both varsity and intramural; student government; a variety of hobby and study clubs; marching bands and orchestras; and several kinds of choruses.

The importance of the activities just described is not always recognized. In the first place, they provide the youngster with a chance to pursue his own interests. Secondly, these activities allow for the development of a feeling of close association with youngsters who have the same interests. Further, these activities allow for student initiative and leadership. In addition, there are provisions for learning how to live in a democratic society and how to get along with other people.

Extra-class school activities are complementary to the school program. Here is provided the chance to participate in a program for one's own enjoyment. No grades are given and no pressure to accomplish a specific amount of work is demanded. Many youngsters find this a good time to practice self-discipline and develop new skills. These activities allow opportunities for students to work with teachers in a new relationship and allow teachers to see another side of the student. Above all, these activities are open to all students. In very few instances performance is a necessary requisite. Most of the hobby, study, and social clubs are open to all who wish to join.

Guidance - More and more schools are embarking on new or improved guidance services. These include testing of all kinds, and counseling. Students now have the chance to seek assistance from teachers with special skills and training. These people are usually prepared to assist students with their programs, to offer information on employment and advanced training, and to help students recognize their strengths and limitations.

It is important to recognize the guidance function of the classroom teacher. Although not a guidance specialist, this person usually knows the student intimately, knows his strengths and his weaknesses. The classroom teacher probably has more contact with her students than the counselor, or any other person in the school. The guidance program was never meant to replace this function of the classroom teacher.

Administrative Changes - Educational administrators, recognizing the nature of the dropout problem, have attempted several approaches to help reduce the dropout rate. Improved transportation, smaller classes and provisions for parent-teacher conferences are some additional ways in which administrators are trying to assist in the solution to this problem. Administrators also recognize the constant need for program evaluation and improvement as part of the process for helping potential dropouts.

Work Experience - A work experience program in which a student is released from school for a part of the day to work for pay is being tried in several schools. In these programs, work and study are closely related. The school usually recognizes the work as a school experience and gives credit toward graduation for this work. Furthermore, the school assumes responsibility for such a program by providing teachers who supervise the work experience and co-ordinate the work program with the school program.

In summary, many public schools are aware of their responsibility to provide each youngster with a complete high school education. All efforts to provide for individual differences should help reduce the number of students who leave school prior to graduation. However, the schools alone cannot solve the problem.

EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOP

by

Bert Greene

The value of any learning experience is the ability of the learner to utilize his "new" knowledge in a meaningful way. Not only must the learner be aware of the information presented, but he must also have an opportunity to use this information. The participants in this workshop will have such an opportunity when they return to their classrooms in the fall.

This workshop was based on the thesis that the more the student would be involved in the planning and execution of the workshop activities, the more meaningful the experience would be. The staff members feel that this workshop has been very rewarding. The extent to which the students actively assumed responsibility for their own learning was highly unusual.

The students were given an opportunity to evaluate the workshop. The data presented below were taken from the workshop evaluation form (See Appendix B).

One question asked of the workshop participants was: What aspects of your work situation do you feel you can improve as a result of this experience. Some of the responses are given in the following section.

I feel that this workshop has made me more aware of each child's individual needs and I will be more able to plan my own curriculum with much more effectiveness.

This has made me much more aware of the responsibilities of an elementary teacher to identify problems which might lead to serious trouble later. I shall be much more aware of implications of certain types of behavioral patterns and will strive to make school experiences more meaningful to each individual.

I should like to try to help co-workers to become aware of "potential" problems. (I) would like to see (the) P. T. A. and the community become aware of the sharing of responsibility to try to avoid the "waste of human resources."

I'm quite sure that I will continue to look critically at *what* I teach as well as *how* I teach in order to try to "capture" individual interests and help children learn in meaningful situations.

I recognize that the teacher is a key factor in the dropout problem and this is what *I* can work on.

My relationships with my students will be more personal. This is what I *want* to do by virtue of my previous training. Now I feel this is *part* of the teaching role.

Having attended this workshop, I *feel* that dropouts can be reduced with understanding and revision of our teaching methods and attitudes. Previously, I considered that when a person left school, he left because school had no interest for him. However, why this feeling existed did not concern me. Now, I realize that I can have much influence on the person who may consider leaving school.

My improvement, I feel, will come in my relationships with the students in my classroom. These students (dropouts) don't have my motives and values. They need more of my time and help.

> I felt motivated, after Thursday's session, to go back to school and jerk the whole staff up by the boot-straps.

> This workshop has done much to make me aware of the dropout problem. To my knowledge, no one in our system does anything about attempting to find out why the students we lose leave school.
>
> I think I'll stir some people up in our school system.

It is interesting to compare these responses with responses given on the pre-workshop questionnaire. Prior to the opening of the workshop, the respondents were asked to indicate why they came and what they expected to get out of this experience. Many students indicated that they planned to do something about the dropout problem after participating in the workshop. This factor was not evident on the pre-workshop questionnaire. The fact that this occurred is some indication of the success of the workshop. It is the hope of the staff members that some of these good intentions will materialize.

The students were asked to rate the various components of the workshop. The following table contains their responses.

Table 5

Student Ratings of Workshop

				Mean score
Discussion groups	1 x 1 1 1 1 1 1	Very meaningful learning experience	No learning experience	1.6
Theory sessions	1 x1 1 1 1 1 1	Very meaningful learning experience	No learning experience	1.9
Other sessions	1 1 x 1 1 1 1 1	Very meaningful learning experience	No learning experience	2.6
Entire lab	1 x 1 1 1 1 1 1	Very meaningful learning experience	No learning experience	1.6

In this table, each line was assigned a numerical value. This allowed for the computation of a mean score for each component.

The students rated the small discussion group higher than any other component of the workshop, this may have been due to the fact that they spent more time in the discussion group than in any other session of the workshop. It may be that the rating is a result of the freedom the students experienced within the small group. The discussion groups were unstructured and the students were allowed to develop their own structure. The rating might then be seen as approval of this type of setting.

The theory sessions were rated fairly high. This is somewhat surprising since they were, in effect, lecture sessions. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that each theory session was presented by a different staff member. No staff member presented two theory sessions consecutively. It is also possible that the theory sessions were highly rated because no session lasted more than forty-five minutes and each session was geared to a specific point of view. In addition, it may be that the theory sessions presented information that could be discussed in the small groups.

The other sessions included resource people, films, interviews with dropouts, and independent study. It can be seen that this component was given the lowest rating. This may have been due to the fact that these were highly structured sessions over which the students had no control. These sessions did not fully capitalize on student activity; in other words, the students were more passive in these sessions than in the other sessions.

No matter how the workshop is perceived and no matter what criterion is used as a yardstick, it can be readily said that this workshop was successful. The students indicated this in their evaluation, and the staff members evaluated this experience similarly.

It may be several weeks, or months, or even years before this workshop can be fully evaluated. For some students, this experience may be of little value; for others, it may make an important difference in their classroom behavior. Until all the data are in, the generalizations regarding this workshop are based on the subjective data available.

APPENDIX A

Name____

1. From what source(s) did you hear about this workshop?

____

2. Can you briefly state your reasons for coming to this lab?

____

____

____

3. Were there some factors which may have made it difficult for you to attend this lab?

☐ No

☐ Yes

What are some of this factors?______________________

____

____

____

4. Do you have any expectations about the kinds of learnings and experiences you feel are important for you to have in the next two weeks?

☐ No

☐ Yes

What are some of your expectations?_________________

____

____

____

APPENDIX B

Name ____

1. Is this the first workshop you have attended?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

2. Are you getting any financial assistance for attending this Lab?

   ☐ School system is paying full expense

   ☐ School system is paying part expenses

   ☐ Paying own expenses

3. Will you be required to submit some form of report to your organization on your experience?

   ☐ Yes

   ☐ No

4. If you were asked to rate the component parts of the workshop in terms of your learning experiences, how would you rate the following?

Discussion groups	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	Mean score
	Very meaningful learning experience						No learning experience	
Theory sessions	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	Very meaningful learning experience						No learning experience	
Other sessions	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	Very meaningful learning experience						No learning experience	
Entire lab	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
	Very meaningful learning experience						No learning experience	

5. What aspects of your work situation do you feel you can improve as a result of this experience?

6. Are there some learning experiences you feel you should have been subjected to that were not offered in the workshop?

7. Are there any general comments (positive or negative) that you would care to make about this workshop?

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